Group Insurance Renewal 2020

At its meeting on March 12, 2020, the Board of Regents approved a recommendation of the University Benefits Committee that the group insurance plans be renewed for the policy year beginning April 1, 2020, at the rates shown below. The plans are being renewed with no change in benefit levels.

New Monthly Benefit Rates for 2020-2021

The following rate schedule is effective April 1, 2020. For a more detailed explanation of coverage, please refer to the Retiree Benefits Guide at [http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php](http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Rate Change</th>
<th>Retiree Rate ($)</th>
<th>University Rate ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health - Single</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>24.86</td>
<td>58.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>73.96</td>
<td>172.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental - Single</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>19.57</td>
<td>19.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.82</td>
<td>35.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel - Single</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>6.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Life</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.078 / 1,000</td>
<td>0.079 / 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Benefits to Remember:

- The [Special Authorization Appeals Subcommittee](http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php) is available to you if you wish to appeal a decision of Medavie Blue Cross denying coverage of a “Special Authorization Drug”.
- The [Employee Assistance Program](http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php) provided by Morneau Shepell offers a comprehensive and confidential suite of services to Memorial’s employees, retirees and family members at no cost, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Download the [Medavie Mobile App](http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php).

Retirees and the Travel Health Plan:

- A coverage exclusion applies for pre-existing medical conditions. For information related to this, please refer to your travel health brochure or call SSQ toll free at 1-800-848-0158.
- Travel health coverage is limited to a maximum of 180 days per trip (extensions are not granted by the insurer SSQ).
- Link to information on the travel health plan, including policy brochure, coverage limitations and questions & answers: [http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php](http://www.mun.ca/hr/retirees/notices.php).
Rate Changes and the Financial Positions of the Group Insurance Plans

Health and Dental

Memorial’s health and dental plans are administered by Medavie Blue Cross on an “Administrative Services Only” basis. This means that the plans are self-insured under an arrangement whereby Memorial and plan members are responsible for deficits as they arise and, in a similar fashion, they are the beneficiaries of surpluses that might accumulate.

Experience under both the health and dental plans remained positive for the past year as the level of premium contributed was slightly higher than the total of claims plus expenses paid. Even though the health plan ended the year with a small surplus, total claims experience was higher than expected owing in large part to a 10.4 per cent increase in prescription drug costs and a 5.3 per cent increase in paramedical costs. These two categories represent approximately 85 per cent of all health claims paid. Upward pressures on drug costs can be expected to continue and this will likely have a significant role to play in the future management and sustainability of the plan. Dental plan experience was in line with expectations.

The level of accumulated surplus in each of the plans is considered sufficient to mitigate future adverse experience as potential deficits would be paid using surplus rather than through an additional rate increase. Surplus may also be used to limit the amount of rate increase requested by Blue Cross in any particular year.

When recommending rate adjustments in the health and dental plans, the University Benefits Committee takes into consideration the level of surplus in each plan and the expected cost increases for the upcoming year. Where warranted, surplus will be used to offset rate adjustments. Given the level of surplus currently retained in the plans, the Committee has recommended rate adjustments for the 2020/21 fiscal year that are lower than those requested by Medavie Blue Cross. Medavie has accepted these lower rates.

Travel Health

The travel health plan provided by SSQ Insurance is a fully insured plan with rates determined based upon the experience of the plan as a whole. The prior year’s travel health experience was positive with a loss ratio of 59 per cent. The travel health rate has been reduced by 5 per cent for 2020/21.

Basic Life

The basic life plan is underwritten on a refund basis which means that any surplus generated is available to the plan to stabilize rates in the event that a deficit emerges. Deficits, however, must be paid. In the prior year, claims exceeded the level of premium contributed and the basic life plan incurred a deficit. As rates are determined based upon the previous five years of plan experience and deficit repayment, a rate increase was initially required. The basic life plan had sufficient accumulated surplus from prior years, however, and a rate increase was avoided for the 2020-21 policy year.
What is the University Benefits Committee?

The University Benefits Committee is a committee of the Board of Regents and is chaired by a Board member. It is the mechanism by which employees and retirees provide input into the operation of the University’s group insurance plans. Represented on the committee are all stakeholder groups including CUPE, NAPE, MUNFA, non-bargaining and management employees and retirees. The key responsibilities and objectives of the Committee are:

1. To offer advice and information to the Board so that the Board may be able to provide, within its financial limitations, adequate benefit plans for its employees and pensioners.
2. To monitor the experience of the benefit plans and make recommendations to the Board for their improved administration.
3. To advise and make recommendations to the Board in respect of proposed new benefit plans or in respect of proposed revisions to existing plans.
4. To issue periodic reports to employees on the status of the benefit plans.

The Committee’s terms of reference may be found here:
https://www.mun.ca/regents/about/committees/benefits.php
Health and Benefits Snapshot (past year)

Employee and Family Assistance Program
Top programs and services available
1. Personal counselling
2. Legal
3. Financial
4. Health and well being
5. Child/youth care

Dental Care
Tip: Prior to any major dental work being commenced request a predetermination

Health Corner:

What is Diabetes?
Diabetes is a chronic condition where, in some people, the pancreas that makes insulin does not work as efficiently as it should, and sometimes it does not make the insulin that you need. Insulin is a hormone that regulates the amount of glucose in your blood. There are two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 Diabetes
Known as insulin-dependent diabetes, where the pancreas produces little or no insulin
10-15% of people with diabetes have Type 1

Symptoms include:
- increased thirst
- frequent urination
- extreme hunger
- unintentional weight loss
- irritability
- fatigue
- blurred vision

Treatment includes:
- taking insulin
- carbohydrate, fat and protein counting
- blood monitoring
- healthy eating habits
- maintaining a healthy weight

Type 2 Diabetes
The body either resists the effects of insulin, or does not produce enough insulin to maintain normal glucose levels

Symptoms are similar to Type 1 diabetes, along with slow-healing sores, frequent infections and areas of darkened skin (armpits and neck)

Managing type 2 diabetes includes
- weight loss
- healthy eating
- exercise
- medication or insulin therapy
- blood sugar monitoring

Uncontrolled diabetes can result in other serious medical complications, such as:
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease and stroke
- Depression
- Eye, nerve and kidney damage
- Infections

You can reduce your risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes by making and maintaining healthy lifestyle habits!

Reminder: your EAP provider Shepell can provide you access and assistance to many more resources including professional counselling, health coaching, nutritional and fitness supports, smoking cessation and more.

Visit www.workhealthlife.com or 1-844-880-9142